

BOSTON.

LITERARY NOTES.

"THE MASQUE OF THE GODS," BY RAYARD TAYLOR—*SAXE'S NEW VOLUME—OTHER INTENTIONS OF OSGOOD & CO.—THE TRUE LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN—THE NORTH AMERICAN—THE ATLANTIC FOR—"THE PHANTOM SHIP—SEPTIMIUS FELTON—WHAT DR. O. W. HOLMES SAYS ABOUT WOMEN'S BUSINESS—A NEW POEM BY BRET HARTE.*

FROM A REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE |

BOSTON, March 11.—Among the most notable

Spring issues of J. E. Osgood & Co. will be "The Masque of the Gods," an entirely new poem, by Rayard Taylor. It is a conception at once daring and reverent—a wonderful miracle-play, in which the gods of all ages and races are *dramatis personæ*, with choruses from mountains, rivers, trees, serpents, wolves, caverns, and rocks, while over all we seem to see the shadow of a vague and mighty presence, awfully pitying—the God, from whom and in whom gods and men and rocks and trees alike live and have their being. John Weiss said

one that in Homer Olympus was but the up stairs of the world, and the contentions and the laughter of its gods came pealing down the staircase. There is nothing of this Greek gayety in the vision of Mr. Taylor. The gods are in earnest, mighty and desperate earnest, as they grope after the explanation of their own power and their own being—grape toward the discovery that they were all permitted by the God—that each one had been

an answer to some need of that great growing human race, which never in vain lifts soul or hands toward the Infinite. The first scene of this wonderful drama is at midnight, on the high table-hand of Panacea. In a spectral moonlight distant mountains peak, glow, and there is an awful silence, broken first by a hoarse murmur from the rocks, who feel in their stone hearts that something has changed. They miss the stains of blood that used to sprinkle their feet—the fires of worship or of sacrifice. "We were and are," they say, "but man is not the same." Then the caverns complain that the mystical secrets which once made them divine have died in their keeping; the serpents, that where once their "smooth, cold undulations gave the sign of fate to nations," they now "writhe abashed, with hunched and cramped head." The wolves wonder "where diday the wazards who were wont to claim our fang and fletchess and the fearful name?" To these, quenching, comes the voice of Odin, bidding them be silent.

The spectators bear the echo of their speech."

Permit fellow, who "ruled by right of eldest cruelty," whose life "the savage strength of man renewed," then bad boasts that he shall not die, since he "begets, not slays." Manio is not confesses that "sent in his hunting-ground above the sky, the voices that address him slowly fail"; and as he speaks, the question, which is the key-note of the poetries to his lips:

"But if ye, of other worlds, declare me this,
Am I yet, or am I made of them?"

"I am, and I am, and I am made of them;
Of one superlative, and therefore I become;

"Or it, alone before them, I have drawn
Through ages of unmeasured companionship—

"Since lonely I am destined to play with men—
To be the last, the last, the last to join to mine,

"And to the powers the expected answer given,
Decide me this!"

And Odin answers:

"Who shall declare the thing?

"Are we then born of those who knew to us?"

And the wailers if, indeed, they have been all the while but servants instead of lords, "dependent still on some thing mightier than themselves; flattering the sense of sole divinity." With the calm of his cold northern heaven upon his lips, great Odin speaks—

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